

Message Text

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INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

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SUBJ: NOMINEES FOR NIH POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

REF: PRETORIA 1239, A-1422, STATE 87555

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY AND USIS

1. IN CONSULTATIONS WITH DR. LOCHNER, CHAIRMAN LOCAL SELECTION BODY (SA MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL) REGARDING ITS ADMINISTRATION OF NIH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM IN SOUTH AFRICA PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO HOW FELLOWSHIPS PUBLICIZED AND HOW NOMINEES SELECTED, MISSION FOUND NO REASON NOT TO ACCEPT NOMINEES LOTTER, CLAIM AND MILLER.

2. CLEARLY SELECTION BODY SEEKS OUT QUALIFIED CANDIDATES FOR THESE FELLOWSHIPS AND IN SELECTING NOMINEES TO RECOMMEND TO HIH COMMENDABLY GIVES WEIGHT TO RELEVANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE RESEARCH PROJECTS PROPOSED BY APPLICANT. MISSION IS CONFIDENT, HOWEVER, THAT BODY COULD TAKE MORE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION TO BETTER PUBLICIZE PROGRAM AMONG ALL RACIAL GROUPS AND TO BETTER REPRESENT ALL RACIAL GROUPS IN SELECTION PROCESS. UNDER PROCEDURE NOW FOLLOWED SA MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL (SAMRC) SENDS FELLOWSHIP ANNOUNCEMENTS AND APPLICATIONS TO SIX SA MEDICAL SCHOOLS AND SOME SIX OTHER RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS. APPLICATIONS RECEIVED ARE REVIEWED BY SELECTION COMMITTEE COMPRISED OF 14 MEMBERS OF SAMRC DRAWN TOGETHER FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF SOUTH AFRICA. THIS COMMITTEE IS WHITE BODY WITH APPROXIMATELY 12 MEMBERS FROM AFRIKAANS

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SPEAKING COMMUNITY.

3. LOCHNER ASSERTED SAMRC WILLING TO RECEIVE APPLICATIONS FROM ALL SOUTH AFRICAN RACIAL GROUPS, BUT TO HIS KNOWLEDGE ONLY WHITES HAVE THUS FAR RECEIVED FELLOWSHIPS UNDER THIS PROGRAM. LOCHNER HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN SELECTION PROCESS FOR PAST 3 YEARS AND COULD RECALL ONLY ONE INDIAN APPLICANT (NO AFRICAN OR COLORED) DURING THAT PERIOD. INDIAN APPLICANT WAS NOT NOMINATED TO NIH BY SAMRC.

4. WHILE NOT FULLY AWARE OF RELATIONSHIP OF NIH AND SAMRC, MISSION BELIEVES NIH SHOULD APPRISE SAMRC OF DESIRABILITY ON PART OF USG OF BROADER PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROGRAM BY ALL SA RACIAL GROUPS. TO THIS END MISSION SUBMITS FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH DEPT MAY WISH PURSUE WITH NIH:

A) SAMRC SHOULD BROADEN PUBLICITY OF FUTURE NIH FELLOWSHIPS BY GIVING WIDER DISTRIBUTION TO INFORMATION ABOUT PROGRAM AND TO APPLICATIONS. PROCEDURE SAMRC NOW FOLLOWING VIRTUALLY LIMITS PROGRAM TO MEDICAL RESEARCH AND EXCLUDES OTHER HEALTH SCIENCES;

B) SAMRC SHOULD VIGOROUSLY SEEK OUT QUALIFIED CANDIDATES AMONG AFRICAN, ASIAN AND COLORED COMMUNITIES;

C) SAMRC SHOULD CONSIDER POSSIBILITY BROADENING MEMBERSHIP OF SELECTION COMMITTEE TO MAKE IT MORE REPRESENTATIVE OF SOUTH AFRICA'S VARIOUS RACIAL GROUPS.

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